

SUPPORTING LGBTQ+ INDIVIDUALS WITH I/DD

Messages we want to send:

People have the right to express their gender however they choose.

A person's gender identity and sexual orientation are part of who the person is, it's part of their identity.

We do not discriminate against LGBTQ individuals.

I can help you sort out if you are LGBTQ.

I believe you when you come out.

I can give you facts about LGBTQ people with I/DD.

I accept you for who you are.

I have resources that can help you get support.

RESPONSES TO SUPPORT LGBTQ INDIVIDUALS:

A person says, "I don't know if I am transgender or gay or what?"

I am really glad you told me this.

It sounds like you are having trouble sorting this out.

Can you tell me what you are feeling and thinking about whether you are LGBTQ?

Here is a list of words that explain how people feel, do any of these seem like you?

A person hints at being gay, "I have a friend who says he is gay. Do you know anyone who is gay and do you think it is ok?"

Many people are LGBTQ and I do know some people.

Everyone deserves to be accepted for who they are, just like you deserve to be accepted for who you are.

A person says, “I am a lesbian.”

I am really glad you told me this.

Is there anything I can do to support you with that?

A person says, “Now that I have accepted myself as non-binary, how do I tell my family?”

That’s a great question.

How do you think your family will respond?

Sometimes it is easier to practice with someone who you trust and you know will have a positive response. Is there anyone in your family that you trust like that?

A person says, “How do I meet other people who are LGBTQ?”

That’s a great question. There are online groups, events, and places where LGBTQ people like to get together. There are also Rainbow Support Groups in MA to meet other LGBTQ people who also have disabilities. How would you like to connect with LGBTQ people?

GENERAL RESPONSE ABOUT DISABILITY AND DISCLOSURE:

A person asks, “Should I disclose that I have a disability when I am looking for a date?”

That’s a good question. Some people do disclose and others wait. Do you have a sense about what you’d like to do?

Let’s do a pros and cons for disclosing your disability. What would be good about disclosing right away? What could be a negative of telling right away?

Now, let’s look at pros and cons for NOT disclosing. What would be good about NOT disclosing right away? What could be a negative of waiting to disclose your disability?